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WEATHER CONDITIONS IN HUNGARY, 25 FEBRUARY-3 JULY 1954

[Temperatures are given in degrees centigrade. Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

25 February-10 March 1954

After the unusually cold and dry weather of the preceding weeks, on 26 February the weather turned milder with frequent showers.

Diurnal temperatures reached average values and on several days even exceeded them. Around 20 February, the temperature throughout the country was still 5-7 degrees below zero during the noon hours. After a rapid thaw, diurnal frost ceased by 27 February throughout the country. The temperature continued to rise, and, by 5 March, it reached 14-18 degrees all over the country. Later, the increase in temperature became moderate.

Nocturnal temperatures also rose considerably. On 23-24 February, the temperature at dawn was generally 15 degrees and in many instances, 20-21 below zero. During the latter part of February, the nocturnal frost began to thaw rapidly. From 27 February to 9 March, only a few areas registered one to 2 degrees below zero. At dawn on 10 March, a cold wave appeared again over a large area.

The ground temperatures reached a moderate level in the above-mentioned period, and after 1 March, most of the country was free of frost. Ground temperatures of 3-6 degrees below zero were noted only on the western border of Transdanubia. On 10 March, ground frost reappeared in all parts of the country and temperatures ranged 4-5 degrees below zero in many localities of Transdanubia and the Great Plain.

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Precipitation was considerably more abundant than in the preceding weeks. Rainfall during the latter part of February increased by 1-3 millimeters over the early part of February. The final results for February left over 90 percent of the country with less than average rainfall, and approximately 55 percent received less than half of the average.

During the first third of March, it rained every day. On 4 days, the rains were country-wide, and on four occasions, at least half the country received rain. The rains were frequently very abundant.

Precipitation during 1-10 March exceeded 20 millimeters, and in some localities, even 40 millimeters, amounting to more than the average for the half month in the largest part of the country.

With the exception of high peaks, virtually the entire snow cover has melted. The dry earth absorbed much of the moisture from the rapidly melting snow.

Ground frosts have disappeared throughout the country. The past winter was drier than usual and from the viewpoint of temperature readings, it will be listed among the four coldest winters of the current century. (1928-1929, 1939-1940, 1941-1942, 1953-1954).(1)

11-27 March 1954

During the past 2-week period, the temperature continued to rise without any notable interruptions, and precipitation was moderate.

For the most part, diurnal temperatures were average for the period. On most days, the temperature rose to 8-12 degrees during the noon hours, corresponding to the average for the season. After 23 March, the temperature continued to rise, and mild weather of 14-18 degrees prevailed throughout the country.

The nights were mostly mild. Nocturnal frosts characteristic of early spring appeared during the past weeks, but were not severe. Temperatures declined to the freezing point only in a few localities, mainly in the eastern and northeastern megyek. Temperatures of 3-4 degrees below zero were registered only on the morning of 24 March in the northern hills and in a few areas in Trans-Tisza. On many nights, no frost was reported, and after March 24, mild temperatures of 5-7 degrees prevailed at night.

Ground frost was reported every night, with 4-6 degrees below zero. But after 25 March, ground frost appeared only sporadically.

Precipitation was frequent after 12 March, but was generally slight. The past 2 weeks were considerably drier than the first third of the month. On 24 March, summer hailstorms developed in the northern region. Precipitation during 1-27 March remained under 20 millimeters only in small areas, while the greater part of the country received 30-50 millimeters, and in a few scattered areas, rainfall even exceeded 50-60 millimeters (Bodvaszilas, 73; Lengyel, 69; and Kald, 67 millimeters).

By 27 March, 40 percent of the country received rainfall equivalent to the average for the entire month. Elsewhere rainfall was generally above half of the average, and, with the exception of scattered areas, only the northeastern section received less than half of the March average.

Sunny weather was below average during the entire month, causing vegetation to make only slight progress.

The characteristic drying winds of early spring were less than usual. Ground temperatures were generally satisfactory for early spring planting.

Moisture in the upper layers of the soil is sufficient in most places, although the extremely severe drought, which lasted from September to the latter part of December, left the lower strata with little moisture. It is therefore essential to conserve all stored water.

The slowly warming weather was generally satisfactory for fall crops. It was favorable for the cultivation of crops and the preparation of spring planting.(2)

28 March-9 April 1954

The past 2-week period was characterized by slowly rising temperatures and recurring rainfall.

For the most part, diurnal temperatures were around average for the season and occasionally higher, rising to 13-15 degrees during the last week of the month and as high as 16-20 degrees on 1 April. After a brief cooling, the temperature again reached 20 degrees on 5 April. Two days later, another cold wave came in from the west.

The nights were generally mild during the period under review.

During the night of 28 March, temperatures of 1-2 degrees below zero were still registered and similar temperatures were noted in small areas on 30 March and on 3 April. The remaining nights were generally mild for the season. The mild weather increased on 4 April, and on the following nights, the temperature declined only to 8-10 degrees throughout the country. On the 8th, the temperature began to drop again.

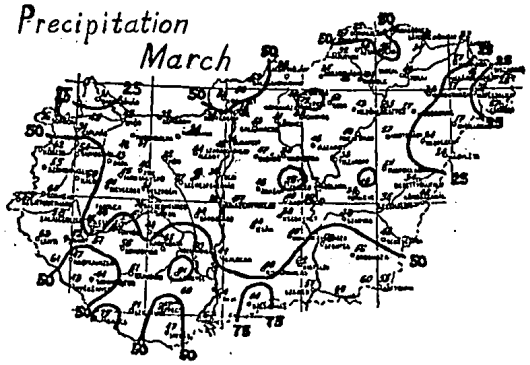
Ground frost appeared every night and with a few exceptions, it was nationwide. In most areas, the ground temperature was 3-4 degrees below zero. In some eastern and western border megyek, frost of 5-6 degrees below zero occurred sporadically.

Precipitation was nationwide on 27 March and 3 April, and approximately half of the country received rain on 5 days.

The precipitation during March amounted to 25 millimeters or less only in the northeastern and northwestern sections of Transdanubia. The greater part of the country received 25-50 millimeters. The area southwest of the Danube and the southern plains received more than 50 millimeters and in some instances over 75 millimeters.

Rainfall was deficient in the northern areas of Transdanubia and Trans-Tisza. Elsewhere, the rainfall was average or greater, and in some places, it exceeded double the average. During 1-9 April, numerous areas in Trans-danubia received 30 and, in some instances, 40 millimeters, of rain. East of the Danube however, large areas had only one to 2 millimeters, and in some areas, precipitation was entirely lacking.

Sunny weather was considerably below average during March. March was one of the cloudiest of the last decade. For example, the total hours of sunshine for the vicinity of Budapest was 76, or 56 hours less than the average over a period of many years and 4 hours less than the minimum for March during the last 50 years (80 hours in 1908).(3)



10-25 April 1954

During the 2-week period of 10-24 April, strong winds and unsettled weather prevailed. The air was unusually cool for the season, and frosts occured frequently.

Diurnal temperatures were well below average on most days. Warm weather was exceptional and reached 15-18 degrees, the average for the season, in scattered areas only. On most days, 7-10-degree temperatures prevailed through-out the country. Later, it warmed up considerably, and temperatures of 14-16 degrees were registered during the noon hours.

The nights were very cool during the entire period.

After the unusually mild nights at the beginning of April, when the thermometer stood at 8-10 degrees, the temperature dropped to one to 3 degrees below zero during 10-24 April. In the northern section of Trans-Tisza, temperatures dropped to 4 degrees below zero after 10 April. During the night of 12 April, readings were 4-6 degrees below zero in the northeastern sections of the country, and the vicinity of Debrecen reported 8 degrees below zero. Freezing temperatures were observed only in a few areas on 23 and 24 April.

Ground frost spread over large areas and reached the severity of 5-6 degrees below zero in Transdanubia during 11-13 April. At the same time, the temperature declined to 5-9 degrees below zero in the Northern Mountain Region and on the Great Plain. In the vicinity of Turkeve and Debrecen, it dropped 10-11 below zero. On 23 April, ground frost was one to 3 degrees below zero throughout the country.

Precipitation was considerably more abundant than during the first third of the month. After 10 April, rain fell sporadically each day. Three rainfalls were nationwide, and on 6 days, more than half the country received some rain or snowfall. The snow cover reached a height of 15-30 centimeters on the peaks of the Matra, and it had not disappeared by 24 April. The unusual weather was also characterized by the fact that in addition to snowfalls, summer storms accompanied by hail developed in numerous localities on 14, 15, 16, and, especially on 22 April. The precipitation during 1-24 April amounted to 30-50 millimeters in most of the country. In scattered areas of northwestern Transdanubia, it reached 50-90 millimeters, while on the Great Plain, especially between the Danube and Tisza, many places received less than 20 millimeters.

The abundant precipitation in northwestern Transdanubia exceeded considerably the average for April. For the country as a whole, the precipitation exceeded 50 percent of the average. In a small area of Transdanubia and in the Danube-Tisza Basin, precipitation was below 50 percent of the average.

Sunny weather was more prevalent than in March but still considerably below the average.

Lack of sunshine, cool weather, and nocturnal frosts during this period greatly retarded the growth of crops, but the increasing warmth later had a very favorable effect on plant development.(4)

26 April-11 May 1954

The weather between 26 April and 11 May was unsettled, with heavy precipitation and, for the most part, cool and deficient in sunshine.

Diurnal temperatures during this period were mostly below average.

In the last week of April, the temperature rose only to 10-15 degrees on most days. On the 27 April, many places registered a maximum of 6-8 degrees. Vigorous warming began on 1 May, and during the first few days of the month, temperatures reached or even exceeded the average of 20 degrees. On 4 May, the greater part of the Great Plain had a summer temperature of 25-26 degrees. A cool air mass from the West caused a considerable drop in temperature on the following day, but on 10 May, temperatures of 20-25 degrees prevailed throughout the country.

Nocturnal frosts prevailed at first but later ceased. During the first days of this period, many localities had temperatures of one to 2 degrees below zero, especially in the north and northeastern counties.

On 29 April, the nocturnal freezing temperatures ceased, and during the first third of May, the minimum temperature was 10 degrees throughout the country.

Ground frost was still nationwide on 25 April, and in various sections, the thermometer stood at 3-5 degrees below zero. Later, ground frost appeared only in smaller areas, but in the northern half of the country, temperatures of one to 5 degrees below zero were registered at dawn of the 28th. On 30 April, ground frosts disappeared.

Precipitation was very abundant. There was nationwide rainfall on 26, 29, and, 30 April. The amount of rainfall on these days exceeded 10 millimeters over large areas and even 20-30 millimeters in various places.

In the greater part of the country, precipitation during 1-30 April totaled 40-70 millimeters. In scattered areas of the Great Plain, only 30-40 millimeters fell. In contrast thereto, large areas in the southern half of Transdanubia received as much as 70-85 millimeters, and the northeastern region received even more. Kapuvar, for example, received 88 millimeters, and Sopron reported 104 millimeters.

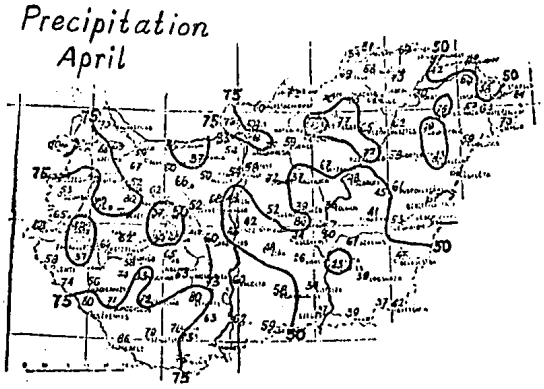
In relation to the average, the entire Northern Mountain Region, Transdanubia, and most of the Great Plain, or approximately two thirds of the country, had abundant rainfall. These sections received up to twice the average precipitation, and the Matra received even more. In the drier than average regions (Transdanubia and a small portion of the Great Plain) precipitation varied between 50 percent and 100 percent of the average.

Precipitation increased in May. During the first third of May, nationwide rains prevailed on 6 days, and rain fell on large areas on the remaining 4 days. The precipitation during the period of 1-10 May exceeded 50 millimeters in many parts of the country and exceeded 60-80 millimeters in various places. In Vas and Somogy megyek, precipitation exceeded 100 millimeters. As a result, precipitation during 1-10 May in many areas, especially in Transdanubia, exceeded the average for the entire month.

Most of the precipitation occurred in the form of showers, frequently accompanied by hail.

Sunshine during April was considerably less than average. For example, Budapest received 125 hours of sunshine, which is 55 hours less than the long-range average. During the first third of May, sunny weather increased.

As indicated in the foregoing, there is no shortage of precipitation. The increasing warm and sunny weather during the first part of May was highly beneficial for the development of the crops.(5)



12-25 May 1954

During the period of 12-25 May, the weather was cooler than average for the season, and recurring rains prevailed throughout the country.

Diurnal warming was generally slow. On a few days around the middle of the month, the temperatures rose only to 12-15 degrees. In scattered areas, the temperature occasionally rose to 21-22 degrees; however, it mostly ranged around 18-20, that is, 2-3 degrees below the average for the season. Nationwide warming increased considerably on 22 May, and during the noon hours of 24 May, 22-25 degree temperatures prevailed throughout the country.

For the most part, the nights were cool, but frost occurred only on two occasions in scattered areas.

On 12 May, nocturnal temperatures ranged from 10 to 12 degrees. Later, however, there was a sharp drop, and on 15 May, nocturnal temperatures fell slightly below zero in the northern sections of Transdanubia and in the areas of Miskolc and Debrecen. At the same time, in the northern and southern border areas of Transdanubia, the Northern Mountain Region, and in the vicinity of Debrecen and Nyiregyhaza, ground frost prevailed, with temperatures of 2-3 degrees below zero. On the following nights, cooling below 5 degrees was exceptional, and ground frost failed to appear.

Precipitation was frequent. The period of 12-15 May was rather dry, but was followed by five nationwide rains. The rainfall of 17 May was especially heavy, particularly in the northern areas, where it amounted to 20-30 millimeters. Widespread areas received rain also on other days. The greater part of the precipitation came from showers, and small hailstorms were reported on 18 May from the Great Plain.

With the exception of the northeastern part of the Great Plain, precipitation during the period under review exceeded 50 millimeters everywhere; 100 millimeters in large areas of Transdanubia, the Northern Mountain Region, and in numerable places on the Great Plain; and 130 millimeters in many places of Transdanubia. Marcali reported 160 millimeters and Kaposvar, 150 millimeters.

By 25 May, precipitation had exceeded the average for the month, with the exception of the northern part of the Great Plain. In local storm centers, the precipitation even exceeded double the average for the month. (The monthly average for May in the greater part of the country ranges from 50 to 80 millimeters.)

The abundant rains of May were favorable for plants, although lack of warm weather and of sunshine retarded growth. The considerable warming during the last week was very beneficial to crop development.(6)

26 May-11 June 1954

During the period under review the weather remained unsettled and mostly cool, with very little sunlight. Rainstorms were frequent.

Diurnal warming was considerable at the beginning and end of the period. During the interval it was slow.

Vigorous warming began on 22 May, and temperatures advanced to 25-27 degrees by the 26th. On 1 June, a cool air mass bearing abundant rain caused a general drop in temperatures. During the first third of the month, only a few places reported a temperature of 25 degrees; in most areas, the temperature stood at 20-30 degrees, or 2-4 degrees below the average. On 9 June, the temperature rose considerably and reached 27-30 degrees in most of the country on the 10th.

As a result of a heavy overcast, the nights were generally mild.

During the last week of May, the nights were mild, with minimum temperatures of 12-15 degrees. On the first few days of June, the temperatures were 1-2 degrees higher; however, on 8 June and on the following night, the temperature dropped to 7-10 degrees and ground temperatures, to 5-6 degrees in several places. By the night of 10 June, minimum temperatures again rose to 16-18 degrees.

The average temperature in May was 0.3-0.9 degree below the average and, with the exception of small areas, sunlight hours also remained below the average. Sunlight was also absent during the first third of June.

Precipitation was abundant. During the last week of May, rainfall was only moderate. Rain fell every day in some part of the country but was nationwide only on the last day of the month.

The rains which fell during 1-31 May exceeded 50 millimeters practically everywhere. In the Matra, in a large part of the Great Plain, and in approximately two thirds of Transdanubia, the rainfall exceeded 100 millimeters.

In various storm centers of Transdanubia, precipitation reached 150-180 millimeters. (Farkasgyepu, 180; Szentgotthard, 165; Marcali, 161; Kaposvar, 159; Turkeve, 153; and Siklos, 151 millimeters.)

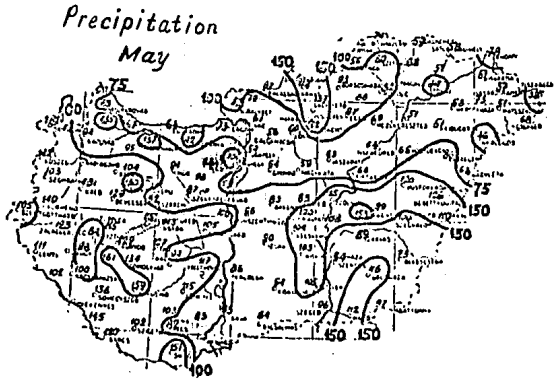
Rain was abundant in 85 percent of the entire area of the country and amounted to double the average in Transdanubia and parts of the Great Plain.

During June, rainfall was very abundant, totaling 30-50 millimeters and in some localities, as much as 60-70 millimeters, accompanied by violent storms and cloudbursts. For example, 78 millimeters fell in Budapest on 1 June. This amount exceeded the entire June average.

Geographic distribution of the precipitation which fell during 1-10 June was very irregular. In the greater part of the country, especially in southern Transdanubia and the Great Plains, precipitation totaled over 50 millimeters, and in some areas, it exceeded 100 millimeters. (Barcs, 148; Hortobagy, 142; Bacsalmas, 135; Turkeve, 122; Lengyel, 113; Szolnok, 107; Budapest and Szigetvar, 103; and Tiszabecs, 102 millimeters.) Accordingly, precipitation during the first 10 days of June exceeded in many places the average for the entire month.

Hailstorms were relatively few, and occurred on 26, 28, 29, and 31 May and on 1, 2, and, 7 June. Only the storm on 7 June extended over a large area.

For the further development of crops, more warm weather and sunlight is desirable.(7)



Cloudburst in the Matra Region

A cloudburst of a magnitude unparalleled for decades occurred in the Matra region on 11 June. Within a few minutes, a huge volume of water rushed down the slopes of the mountain, inundating parts of the city of Gyongyos and several adjacent towns. The height of the water reached nearly 1.5 meters in several places.(8)

The Weather During the First Half of The Year

During the last 6 months, the weather has been unfavorable and unpleasant. During January and February, temperatures were 6-7 degrees below the long-range average, and last winter was one of the most severe winters in the current century.

The beginning of spring was also unfavorable, with the sun shining only for 80-100 hours during March, as compared with an average of 130-160 hours; April and May ware also deficient in sunlight.

As a result, the growth of plants was retarded, although precipitation was plentiful, and, in some areas, even excessive.

Warmer weather set in during June. At the same time, however, there were violent storms and even frequent cloudbursts which caused flash floods. Such cloudbursts occurred recently at Buda, in Heves Megye, and elsewhere, resulting in 60-80-millimeter rains.

At present, although the temperature is not too high, the humidity is high because of the absence of air currents. This condition is caused by the predominance of maritime air masses.

The arrival of maritime air masses at the beginning of the summer is accompanied by cloudy and stormy weather. This is due to the late warming in the middle of the continent, as the warmer and lighter continental air is displaced by the maritime air masses, which are cooler but are more humid and therefore denser.

Such air masses continue to stream in, sometimes for weeks, at the beginning of summer and make even the beginning of July cloudy and stormy. Thus, the first half of this summer promises to be changeable, cloudy, and cool. The Hungarian peasant has a saying, "If it rains on St Medard's Day (10 June), it will continue to rain for 40 days."

Despite this unpromising prospect, there are favorable elements in the weather balance sheet. The recent weather, unpleasant as it was, brought sufficient precipitation, saving the country from the general drought which had threatened Hungarian agriculture as late as last spring as a result of the exceedingly dry fall. This precipitation supplied the soil with sufficient moisture for all plants, especially root crops.(9)

Heavy Storms in the Northwest of Hungary

On 1 July, heavy storms occurred throughout Hungary, with hail storms in numerous localities, causing considerable damage.

At Miskolc and its vicinity, where the winds attained a velocity of 80 kilometers per hour, houses were damaged, power and telephone lines torn out, and the wheat and corn crops destroyed.

In the mining areas of Nograd Megye, work had to be stopped because of power failure.

The storms paralyzed the power plant of the Peti Nitrogen Muvek (Pet Nitrogen Works). Since the transformers were heavily damaged, the plant could not receive power from the national grid for 24 hours.

In Heves, Nograd, Veszprem, and Gyor megyek, the crops were heavily damaged by the storm and are partly under water. Hail has been reported from Fejer, Gyor, Szabolcs, Somogy, Hajdu, Szolnok, and Baranya megyek.

According to an announcement of the Meteorological Institute, the series of heavy storms ended on 2 July, with the exception of the southeastern part of the country, where further storms may break out. In the rest of the country, colder air masses predominate, justifying the expectation of more balanced weather conditions.(10)

SOURCES

1. Budapest, Magyar Mezogazdasag, Vol IX, No 6, 16 Mar 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
2. Ibid., Vol IX, No 7, 1 Apr 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
3. Ibid., Vol IX, No 8, 16 Apr 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
4. Ibid., Vol IX, No 9, 1 May 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
5. Ibid., Vol IX, No 10, 16 May 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
6. Ibid., Vol IX, No 11, 1 Jun 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
7. Ibid., Vol IX, No 12, 16 Jun 54 (Article signed by Istvan Kulin)
8. Budapest, Nepszava, 13 Jun 54
9. Budapest, Szabad Nep, 14 Jun 54 (Article signed by Pro Nandor Bacso)
10. Budapest, Magyar Nemzet, 3 July 54

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